

## Reading 4: *Blackwood's*: Worksheet

Reading 4. Laurence Oliphant, 'Political Tragedies in Japan', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 91 (April 1862) pp. 424-33.

### I. General Questions (regarding all materials)

1. What is the date, venue, and main subject of the article?
2. What do we learn about the personal experience of Japan of the author from the article?
3. Does the article contain any obvious mistakes or misunderstandings concerning the history and politics of Japan?
4. What position/attitude does the author take towards the system of Japanese government?
5. What position/attitude does the author take towards Japanese culture and society more generally?
6. What position/attitude does the author take towards Western relations with Japan?
7. Does the article reflect the modes of thought that we have termed Social Darwinism and Orientalism? If so, where and how?

### II. Specific Questions

1. Who are the following:
  - = Kampfner, Siebold, Thunberg (p. 424a)
  - = Kinahan Cornwallis (p. 424a)
  - = Mr Hodgson (p. 424b)
  - = Taiko Sama (p. 425b)
  - = Shendai (p.427b)
  - = Ikamonokami (p.428a)
2. What do the following phrases mean:
  - = "the almost insurmountable obstacles which attend the pursuit of truth in Japan" (p.424a)
  - = "a complicated piece of machinery" (p.426b)
  - = "a series of tragedies" (p.427a)
  - = "infested by the retainers of the grandees" (p.430b)
  - = "the so-called patriotic party" (p.433a)